

Teamwork

NEWS

March 2005



A NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Appeals Operations staff shown are as follows: (first row, seated) Marilyn Bond, Vershon Claybrooks, Mildred Haskins, Brandi Reynolds, Bonnie Flowers, Jackie Tomlinson; (second row) Elaine Samuels, Edith Rippeto, Regina Jernigan, Alma (Amy) Moore, John Begarly, Christian Rosdhal, Darlene O'Brien, Michael Thomason; (third row) Barbara Angus, Frank Cotter, Christi Salazar, Deborah Coble, Jackie Cox, Bill Sizer, Darrell Harper, Shelby Niles, Phyllis Myatt, Starr Atwood, and Michael Betts; not present: Lynda McDaniel, Joyce Randles, Fred Carroll, Bill Keeling, George King, Fred Bell, Pete Heil, Sheila Lebron-Alverio, Betty Free, and Sue West.

Two Employment Security units cited for outstanding performance

The **Appeals Tribunal and Board of Review** and the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit** programs have received regional and national recognition for recent performance.

The Unemployment Insurance program in each state is closely monitored by the U.S. Department of Labor. There are a number of statisti-

cal standards that pertain to all phases of the U.I. claims process that staff are required to meet.

"In Appeals, we are measured on the *quality* of our hearings and the *promptness* with which we conduct hearings and issue decision on appealed claims," said Michael

(Continued on page 5)

What's inside

New managers	2
Project Paycheck 2	
Success story	3
Employee story	4
Two units cited	5
AndreaWalks	6

Managers named for two offices

Jane Gibson

was recently appointed manager of the West Tennessee Career Center in Paris, and **Denise Reynolds** has been named manager of the Dresden office. They succeed John Montgomery, who was manager of the Paris and Dresden offices before he retired.



Jane Gibson

Jane has been with the department as an hourly employee, working as an interviewer; she has also worked as an unemployment claims adjudicator. She is a Henry County native, and her years in the area will benefit the customer and employees of the West Tennessee Career Center in Paris.

Denise has been employed with the department since 1974 and has worked in Weakley, Obion, and Lake counties. She has extensive knowledge of all programs of the department, including unemployment insurance and job service, and has been manager of the Union City office since 1991; she will

continue managerial responsibilities for that office.

A native of Nashville, she has lived in Martin since 1968. She is a 1972 graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin and is married with two children. Twice she has received the employee Award of Excellence for the TDLWD.



Denise Reynolds



10th Annual Project Paycheck

- 2,826 job-seekers (signed in)
- 141 Exhibitors (147 actual booths)
- More than 100 volunteers from the sponsoring organizations
- More than 400 volunteer hours!

A special thank you to our media partners:

The Tennessean
Channel 4
92Q
Star 97
106.7 The Fan
95.5 The Wolf
WTN
WSM-AM



June Allen is inspiration to Sumner County Career Center staff

*Note: The following success story was submitted by **Thelma Meadows**, manager for the Sumner County Career Center. **June Allen**, part-time interviewer with the Career Center, tells her story . . .*

After being in the workforce with the same company for 21 years I was diagnosed with lymphoma in 1992. I went from secretary, to order entry clerk, then customer service rep and was finally assigned as a purchasing agent for a local office furniture company. My last job as a purchasing agent required aggressiveness, knowledge of company products, a close business relationship with our vendors and knowledge of the best method of transportation to and from our facility. We used the "just-in-time" method, which meant we had to keep a close watch on inventories and receive only the correct number of parts required for our current manufacturing process. I was the first woman to work in purchasing, which was a milestone for me and the company; this was also a great source of pride for me.

The next nine years were times of sickness for both me and my husband, who passed away in May 1995. By this time I had lost my self-esteem, creativity, confidence, desire, and motivation to ever work again. After numerous doctor visits, I was advised to get out and do something, even if it was volunteering for the local hospital, library, or my church.

I finally contacted a company called Experience Works, which assists older people in helping them find suitable employment. In February 2001 I made an appointment with the local



June Allen

representative for Experience Works and met him at 175 College Street in Gallatin; he suggested I become the receptionist for the Sumner County Career Center. I accepted the job and found I loved the work - being in charge of the front desk, answering /transferring calls, meeting the public, and assisting the people in the career center in any way I could.

Working for Experience Works at the Career Center was a job I wanted to do indefinitely, but my time to rotate to another position was coming up, and then I found out my job was going to be phased out in December 2004. Due to my performance and "fitting in" with the rest of the staff, I was encouraged to submit an application and work the same job as a state employee. Needless to say I was very proud when I was hired as an hourly employee in November 2004 to work at the career center.

To me this is one of the greatest of all success stories. I've found these qualities with my job at the Career Center: working with people I like and who like me; being able to make a decent wage for the first time in years; and regaining my confidence, self-esteem, and

(continued on page 5)

Calendar

April 14, 2005
March 2005 state unemployment figures released

April 21, 2005
March 2005 county unemployment figures released

April 18 - 19, 2005
**Eighth Workers' Comp Education Conference
Nashville Airport Marriott**

May 5 - 6, 2005
**Tennessee Chapter IAWP Spring Educational Conference
Montgomery Bell State Park**

May 16 - 20, 2005
Elevators Safety and Reinspection Conference, Gatlinburg

May 19, 2005
April 2005 state unemployment figures released

May 26, 2005
April 2005 county unemployment figures released

May 30, 2005
Memorial Day offices closed

May 31, 2005
Deadline for submitting Carl T. Anderson Scholarship applications

July 24 - 27, 2005
**28th Tennessee Safety & Health Congress
Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville**



Every Employee

Has a story

Spotlight: Raymond Neal

What is the nicest thing someone has ever done for you?

For my 50th birthday, the dear people I work with gave me a surprise celebration. This was the first birthday party I had ever had in my life. Needless to say I was surprised. Unfortunately, for some reason, I was so embarrassed I made them promise to never do that again. I shall always remember that day fondly and remember the lesson in humility.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

I have this crazy idea that I understand chaos. It's helped, working at 1295 Poplar these many years.

How long have you worked for the state and what do you like best about your job?

I started with the agency in June 1968. As a youth I always thought I'd be a scientist or an architect. I never dreamed there was so much reward in serving people. Whenever I'm out in public, inevitably someone won't remember my name and call me "Mr. Employment Office."

What is the biggest issue in state government that affects your life?

The end of personal contributions to retirement has come back to haunt me. They moved up the age for maximum social security. Other than that I refuse to answer on the grounds I may be HATCHeted.

What's in the top drawer of your desk?

- Six ID badges from various meetings (the earliest dating back to 1997)
- An empty bakery paper sack – it folds so nicely I was sure I'd be able to use it for something
- An applicant's veterans papers that he never came back to pick up; my last attempt (a year ago) I found he had moved to St. Louis
- An old daily time distribution report sheet, dated May 1997
- A hex screw for taking down and putting up the old panels for the modular furniture we had for years
- Seventy-nine keys; most I have no idea what they once opened



Raymond Neal

*Note: **Raymond Neal** is manager of the Memphis 1295 Poplar office.*

IAWP seeks scholarship applicants

The Carl T. Anderson Scholarship was established by the 1994-1995 Tennessee Executive Board. Mr. Anderson had a distinguished career in state government, including serving in Governor Frank Clement's cabinet as commissioner. Mr. Anderson was a strong supporter of our professional association. He is the only person in Tennessee to serve at an elected international position. Mr. Anderson wholeheartedly supported the concept of this scholarship. We hope it will continue to help families in our membership for many years to come.

The scholarship was set up with his support to provide financial assistance to college-bound children and grandchildren of active IAWP members. In July 2004, we awarded three \$500 scholarships. Recipients were Kathryn Lane, Jason Daniel and Alex Dowlen. The chapter has now awarded 14 scholarships for a total of \$7,000.

The scholarship is funded solely by contributions made "In Honor Of" and "In Memory Of" individuals. This is a loving and lasting way to remember or honor someone special. Acknowledgments are sent to Mr. Anderson's family and the honoree or honoree's family.

We will be able to award at least three scholarships in 2005. The deadline to return an application is **May 31, 2005**. Winning applicants will be notified in July. Brochures and applications are available by contacting Joan Dowlen at 615-253-5649.

Units cited (Cont.)

Thomason, director of Appeals Operations. "This latter category is commonly referred to as our 'time-lapse' percentages. The U.S. DOL has used time-lapse percentages to measure promptness for many years. There are three standards that apply to the Appeals Tribunal and three standards that apply to the Board of Review."

Thomason said the U.S. DOL announced recently that it is changing the promptness standard. Instead of three measures for the Appeals Tribunal and three for the Board, the federal department will use a single measure at each level called the "Average Age of Pending Appeals."

"In other words, we will have an 'average case age' measure for the Appeals Tribunal and an 'average case age' measure for the Board. The measure is so new there is not yet a standard, but we're told that Tennessee's performance at both levels far exceeds the national average."

The Tennessee numbers compared to the U.S. are as follows:

Lower Authority

Tennessee	24.6 days
National Average	46.3 days

Higher Authority

Tennessee	31.2 days
National Average	65.8 days

The **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program** ranks third in the nation for the number of certifications issued for the federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2004.

During federal fiscal year 2004, Tennessee issued nearly 19,000 certifications, surpassed only by Ohio and California, more than the larger states such as Texas, Florida, Michigan, Penn-



WOTC staff pictured are (first row) Marilyn Mattox, Charlene Bailey, and Sammie Scott-Hyde; (second row) Gloria Ross, Randy Warren, and Patricia Branch; not pictured: Roger Littlejohn and Deborah Jones.

sylvania, Illinois, New York, and New Jersey.

Tennessee has consistently ranked in the top 10 states since FY 1999. Also for the fourth year in a row, Tennessee

Success story (Cont.)

motivation for life in general. It's good to feel like I am contributing something to the work place, to have a sense of independence about myself, and to have a sense of pride after so many years.

I want to thank the people at Sumner County Career Center (their motto is "Where People and Jobs Connect") for giving me the opportunity to work at the center and for a renewed life.

was first in the Atlanta region for the number of certifications issued.

Employee Commendation

To: **Southeast Career Center @ Athens**
From: A claimant

"This is to thank the staff for their assistance after my employer closed. The entire team performed courteously, yet efficiently, even with a large influx of claims.

Many thanks to the entire staff at Athens, especially **Jamie Lisi**, who filed my claim weekly."

AndreaWalks for Scott County

AndreaWalks – First Lady Andrea Conte’s 600-mile journey across the state to raise awareness about child abuse and to raise funds for the 27 nonprofit organizations that provide support to child victims of severe physical or sexual abuse – is currently taking place in the eastern part of the state. The east Tennessee portion, which began in Chattanooga, included a segment in Oneida, and the TDLWD office there saluted the event.

Sharon Keeton, manager of the Oneida office, reports that office staff designed and erected a four-by-six-foot sign honoring the First Lady for the AndreaWalks part in Scott County. Staff stood by the sign and waved, and the First Lady crossed the street to acknowledge their greeting, saying she was very impressed with the signs and the response of walkers.

“I was asked to serve on the committee for AndreaWalks and assisted with the sponsorship and reception, including preparing food. I also attended a breakfast honoring the First Lady,” said Sharon. “Andrea walked 25 miles



Communications Director **Milissa Reiersen** (left) helped with publicity for AndreaWalks in Oneida and LaFollette and joins **Andrea Conte**, Tennessee’s First Lady, in taking part in the event.

in two days, and I took part in the walk.”

AndreaWalks advances to Bristol on April 13, where Conte and “AndreaWalkers” will walk around the Bristol Motor Speedway.

The walk will not end in Bristol, as event organizers originally planned. AndreaWalks will be partnering with Nashville’s own County Music Mara-

thon™ & 1/2 Marathon on April 30 to raise additional funds for child advocacy.

“It seems fitting that after AndreaWalks has covered the entire state of Tennessee, it should have its big finish and celebration in our state’s capital,” said Conte.

Teamwork News



Department of Labor & Workforce Development;
February 2001; authorization no. 337287.

Phil Bre desen
Governor

Milissa Reiersen
Communications
Officer

James G. Neeley
Commissioner

Martha Deacon
Editor



Flanking the sign welcoming Andrea Conté to Oneida are (from left) Suzanne O’Neal, Theda Jeffers, Debbie Foust, and Sharon Keeton.